

## For the Little Folk.

### BEYOND THE GATE.

"Children," said Mrs. Jay, "you may play any where in the yard, but don't go beyond the garden gate."

"Yes, mother," said Peter, "Do not go beyond the garden gate!"

Mother then seeing her little boy and girl quietly at play in the yard, put on her bonnet and shawl and went down street.

Peter and Jessie, his little sister, had nice plays together. He used to make believe horse, and draw her on trucks; or she make believe a pumpkin; or they would both make believe cows, and set up a terrible moaning; indeed, there was no end to the different characters they took, all the while keeping very kind to each other. Their plays this afternoon led them down to the bottom of the garden, where there was a gate, hinged inside, which opened into a field of thick underbrush and trees, sloping down to a lower part of the village. This was the forbidden gate.

"I wish we could go out into the woods," said Peter; "perhaps we should find a bird's nest."

Peter unhasped the gate, and he and Jessie looked round and saw the pretty woods.

"But what did mother tell us?" asked Jessie.

"Perhaps she was afraid of bears," answered Peter, "or the water in the woods, or something; but there are no bears. O, there's a squirrel on that tree! See him, see him, Jessie, and away ran Peter to the woods, and away ran Jessie after him.

The squirrel hid, and the children went on, hoping to find another. They strayed down a bank, and came to a brook and little pond.

"Mother thought we'd fall into this pond and that's the reason she cautioned against us coming here," said Peter; "but we shan't, shall we, Jessie?"

"No," answered Jessie, "we won't." And so they ran round, and tumbled about, and picked flowers, and at last got back to the garden-gate safe and unharmed, without any body knowing they went. "Jessie," said Peter, "don't you tell."

"Not if mother asks," asked Jessie.

"She won't ask," said Peter.

Mother did not ask, nor did Jessie tell, and all went on at home as usual. Saturday night after the children were washed, and Jessie had gone to sleep, Peter and his mother talked a little longer together, as they often did Saturday night. Peter said, "Mother, I have been in the woods beyond the garden-gate this week."

"When did you go?" she asked. He told her. "And, mother," he said, "nothing happened to us there; we didn't fall into the water, or get wet, or tear our clothes; no bears ate us up."

"Why didn't you want us to go?"

"You lost something that afternoon in the woods," said his mother. "Lost something?" said Peter; and he thought of his knife, and his slate pencils, and his ball, and a three cent piece in his pocket; he hadn't lost one of them, he was quite sure.

"Yes," repeated his mother, "think a moment what you have missed, for I know you have lost something." Peter for a moment thought his mother must be a spirit; for how could she know when he didn't know himself? "You will recollect if you think," said she. Peter put his head under the bed-quilt, for he began to see that he had lost something; and the more he thought the more sure he was of it. "Mother," he at last said, in a little, sorrowful voice, "I did lose something in those woods; I did. I lost the happy out of my heart."

It does not always concern a child to know why his parents forbid him this or that; his duty is obedience. Nor because nothing befalls him in a course of disobedience must he conclude no harm is done at all. Peter and Jessie got home safely; but was there no harm done? Yes; yes; the happy left their little hearts. They were afraid—afraid their mother would find it out. This is the way doing wrong wrongs you. It wrongs you out of that peace and comfort which God made you to enjoy; and all Peter's play in the woods did not make up for this loss till he told his mother and received her forgiveness with her good-night kiss.

THE HOUND AND THE HARE.—After a long chase, a Hound at length came up to a Hare, but instead of at once putting an end to her life, the Hound at one time licked the poor Hare, and at another time bit her. Being sorely puzzled to know the reason of this conduct, she said, "If you are a friend, why do you bite me? But if you are an enemy, why do you caress me?" A doubtful friend is worse than an open foe.

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